

Spring 2024 DA Edition



Plattsburgh UUP Chapter Newsletter Special Spring 2024 Delegate Assembly Edition

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Upcoming Events



Spring 2024 Delegate Assembly



Delegates at the Spring 2024 DA.

Front: Kim. Middle: Michelle, Shawna, Debbie, Dave, Ray. Back: Gerianne, Wendy.

Spring 2024 DA: Delegate Debriefs

From Chapter President Michelle Toth:

UUP Support for Teacher Education

- The Spring 2024 Delegate Assembly passed the “Resist NYSED Proposal to Change Teacher Certification Requirements” resolution.

This calls for supporting the UUP teacher education committee in the campaign against the acceptance of this proposal and to work with PSC and NYSUT members to disseminate talking points on this issue for members to be informed.

- On April 15, 2024 UUP and PSC sent a joint letter to Commissioner Rosa and Members of the NY State Education Department Board of Regents.

“After garnering extensive input from our members in educator preparation programs at CUNY and SUNY campuses across the state, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) and United University Professions (UUP) stand together in opposition to any proposal that would make a master’s degree optional for professional teaching certification in New York State.”

[See the full letter here](#)

From Chapter VPP Gerianne Downs:

Professionals Meeting Updates

Survey to Come on Workload Issues for Professionals

Get ready for a professional concerns survey.

Carolyn Kube, vice president for professionals statewide, gave a report at the Delegate Assembly Presidents/Vice Presidents meeting about plans to launch a survey to professionals around the idea of workload burdens.

According to Kube, “workload has been increasing at an alarming rate for professionals. It has increased from beyond the ‘creep’ of an extra duty one year to the next, to gaining the entire duties of a colleague’s job. More and more at every chapter across the state we have been hearing about workload.

“UUP can help coach our professionals on how to handle extra duties in their performance programs and how and when to request compensation for those duties. More needs to be done within chapters and system wide. That is the goal of the survey.”

The survey will look for data that can be used at the labor/management table and at the statewide labor/management table, Kube said.

She said they’ll be looking for information such as

- How many new duties are our professionals taking on?

- Are you working more hours to complete your duties?
- Are you being compensated?
- What departments are experiencing staffing shortages?
- Do you want to define “professional obligation” in the contract?

Kube said her hope is to get a significant response rate across the system to be able to correct the issues on a statewide level instead of individually, to get the data to back legislation for the budgetary need for increases in full time professionals’ lines and to gain insight into some possible contractual changes.

“A survey is not the end-all-be-all to solve the issues that surround workload, but it is the beginning of getting an in-depth understanding about how widespread it is and give us the concrete data that is often needed to get at solutions,” she said.

Benefit Trust Fund Discussed at Professionals Meeting

During the Professional Concerns meeting at the DA, we had a long discussion on Benefit Trust Fund benefits, most pointedly Delta Dental, which has been dropped by most of the providers in our area. I brought up the question, asking what can be done about it. The UUP Benefit Trust Fund representative said they are working with Delta and hoping to be able to come to some arrangement that would perhaps increase reimbursements, since reimbursements seem to be the biggest reason for dentists to drop the coverage. However, she said it’s happening across the state and with many of the insurance companies.

In addition to Delta Dental, we have DavisVision, which is experiencing some similar issues that Delta has experienced with members, such as providers no longer accepting Davis, but there were also questions about members being charged a co-pay at their vision providers. It was explained that under the Benefit Trust, our eye exams are free; however, certain tests fall under Medical and would therefore require a copay. Be sure to discuss with your provider which procedures are being done. If all you want is an eye exam, you’re allowed to request that and therefore have no copay.

Another Benefit Trust Fund benefit is basic life and personal accidental death/dismemberment insurance. Members need to sign up for the free coverage, which is \$10,000 life and \$10,000 accidental death or dismemberment. But more than that, it offers many other free services like travel assistance, self-service legal document creation program and more.

Members are also encouraged to look into the Benefit Trust Fund Scholarship programs, offered to dependents attending SUNY schools. \$750 per semester per member child will be awarded.

PsychHub is a fairly new benefit that offers dozens of resources for mental health. More information on the Benefit Trust Fund can be found under the Members tab of the UUPinfo.org website or click here: <https://uupinfo.org/benefits/mst.php>

If you have any questions on any of the benefits, contact one of the dedicated representatives at UUP Statewide at 800-887-3863.

From Delegate Wendy Gordon:

GSI Committee

The Gender and Sexuality Interests Committee participated in the DA with a table in the vendor/benefits display. We handed out exciting "pronoun pins," palm cards with NYSUT resources for LGBTQ+ members, and - the big hit of the display - NYSUT "We Are One" pride badges with magnetic clasps (not pins). It was a terrific opportunity to talk with members about why pronouns matter and how easy it is for an ally to display support. Simply wearing a pin or displaying a card can help a person who feels isolated realize they are not alone. GSI Committee meets monthly on Zoom and is looking for new active members.



From Delegate David Curry:

Academic Medical Programs Committee

The Academic Medical Programs Committee met at the Spring DA with representatives from the SUNY University Hospitals, medical schools, and other medical programs from the comprehensive colleges. It was decided that the committee would craft a letter in support of the SUNY academic Medical Center Hospital model. In this model, there is a hospital for each medical school (Upstate in Syracuse, Downstate in Brooklyn, Stony Brook and Buffalo) the rationale is quite simply that this is the most efficient way to educate future generations of medical providers. This letter will advocate on behalf of maintaining the SUNY Downstate hospital and at the same time support the creation of a hospital in Buffalo. The second action item was to explore any legal options related to an agreement made in 2001 between New York State and previous SUNY Chancellor Robert King pertaining to the payment of hospital, employee fringe benefits, hospital, debt, service, and utilities. Under the terms of that agreement, New York State would continue to provide financial support in exchange for SUNY absorbing those local costs. As there has been no financial support from SUNY since 2017, it appears the state is violating the agreement. More research needs to be done. The final action item was for this committee to move forward to inform, educate, and advocate for the New York Health Act on behalf of UUP members. Martha Livingston and David Curry have been charged with developing a presentation/workshop with the intended audience being UUP members at the chapter level.

From Officer for Retirees Ray Guydosh:

Some Resolutions Discussed

At the recent Spring Delegate Assembly (DA), the two statewide Vice-Presidents were re-elected along with electing several statewide executive board members. The Delegates dealt with some housekeeping policy issues, authorized affiliating with Higher Education Labor United, a national coalition of higher education faculty and professionals (<https://higheredlaborunited.org>), and also after extensive and more-or-less cordial discussion, affirmed the UUP Executive Board's statement on the conflict in the Middle East (<https://uupinfo.org/communications/uupdate/240405E.php>) as a substitute for several other proposed resolutions on the topic. Delegates also endorsed the creation of the Ad-Hoc Constitutional Reform Committee, which would investigate the possibility of UUP organizing and incorporating new bargaining units beyond the scope of its existing bargaining unit, possibly including the private sector.

UUP Service Awards

Plattsburgh Recipients

UUP recognizes members who serve in active roles as officers or delegates for the union. This round UUP recognizes the following:



Gerianne Downs



Dan Gordon



Wendy Gordon



Gary Kroll



John Locke



Michelle Toth

Retiree Members: David Curry, Ray Guydosh, Kim Hartshorn, and Deborah Zinser

Incoming Compensation from our Contract

Coming Soon....

Raises

3% Raise on July 1 or Sept. 1 (depending on professional obligation)

Lump Sum Bonus – Part 1 (Not added to base salary)

\$1,500 in the first July 2024 payroll (prorated for part-timers)

You must have been employed at the time of contract ratification (Aug. 2023) to be eligible and remained employed through April 30, 2024.

Retention Awards

Starting July 1, 2024, increased from \$500 to \$1,000.

Those newly getting Continuing Appointment or Permanence (or other qualifications as listed in the contract) will receive \$1,000. Those who have already met the criteria will receive \$500. (Added to base salary)

Adjunct Course Rates (per 3-credit course)

As of the Fall 2024 semester the new rate is: \$4,000.

Please check your hiring paperwork to ensure you are paid the correct amount!

2024-2025 NY State Budget for SUNY

Highlights

SUNY Operating Aid:

The 2024-25 enacted budget provides \$114 million in new operating aid state-operated SUNY campuses.

This funding is in addition to the recurring \$163 million increase that UUP's advocacy secured last year.

Full-Time Faculty Funding: The enacted budget includes \$53 million for hiring full-time faculty at SUNY state-operated campuses and community colleges.

Educational Opportunity Programs/Educational Opportunity Centers:

The 2024-25 enacted budget increases funding for EOP by \$1.9 million for a total of \$44.4 million.

Tier 6 Final Average Calculation Pension Reform

This legislation changes the final average salary calculation for determining pension benefits for members of a defined benefit pension program from five years to three years.

Changes to the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

- **Tuition Assistance Program:**

The enacted budget provides an increase of \$55.7 million for a total of \$959.76 million.

The minimum tap award is raised from \$500 to \$1,000 and the income thresholds are also raised

- **TAP GAP:** The enacted budget provides an increase of \$5.1 million to cover the TAP gap for a total of \$54.7 million.

- **Part X - Increasing the Minimum Award and Income Thresholds for Tuition Assistance Program**

This legislation increases the minimum TAP award from \$500 to \$1,000 and increases the income thresholds as follows:

- Families of dependent students from \$80,000 to \$125,000
- Independent students from \$10,000 to \$30,000
- Independent students with a spouse and no other dependent from \$40,000 to \$60,000

AI in the Workplace and in the Union

UUP is already tracking the inclusion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the workplace and how it is being addressed in other union contracts (WGA and SAG-AFTRA in particular). We are already gathering information, stories, and cases of how AI is or could impact our work and our intellectual property. There are a variety of ethical, legal, and labor issues to be considered and addressed.

- How and where is our intellectual property being uploaded into AI systems?
Students including exam questions or writing prompts in queries.
Students uploading articles to summarize or evaluate them.
- What are the guidelines for acceptable use of AI in our work?
Use AI to help compose syllabus statements or write exam questions.
Use to help write reports, grant applications, etc...
Note: SUNY has already held several online workshops on how employees can make use of a variety of AI tools.
- If AI helps you create it to what extent is it your intellectual property?
What are the legal and ethics guidelines for citing when work is fully or partially from AI?
- Are campuses using AI bots or systems instead of filling lines to do some work?
- Is there a perception that if we are all using AI in our work, by default we can do more work?

Some AI Tools:

ChatGPT <https://chat.openai.com/> Text generator

Gemini <https://gemini.google.com/app> Google's AI generator

Claude <https://claude.ai/> brainstorm, analyze images, and process documents

Perplexity <https://www.perplexity.ai/> search and summarize the web

Bing Image Creator <https://www.bing.com/images/create> image generator

Almanack <https://www.almanack.ai/> lesson plans and content